

Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council
Quarterly Meeting Minutes ~ March 26, 2020
On-line meeting with Zoom
Approved June 25, 2020

Present: Kaiya Andrews, Amanda Bianchi, Gina Carrera, David Frye, Miriam Stoll, Betsy Choquette, Melanie Feddersen, Mike Gruteke, Francoise Kahindo, Steve Kieselstein, Dion LaShay, Hannah Neff, Ed Paquin, Candice Price, Courtney Quinlan, Jesse Suter, Havah Walther, Crista Yagjian
Absent: Julie Arel, Carol Hassler, Hillary Hill, Terry Holden
VTDDC Staff: Kirsten Murphy, Susan Aranoff, Chelsea Hayward

1. Welcome:

Miriam noted that a quorum was present. She described meeting etiquette and the importance behind muting mics unless people are speaking.

Motion: Crista made the motion to accept the agenda. Kaiya seconded. There was no discussion. Motion passed: 16-0-0 with a roll call vote.
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2. Election for Council Chair:

Miriam asked for nominations.

Motion: Miriam nominated Courtney for chair. Crista seconded. There was no discussion. Motion passed: 15-0-0.

Courtney Quinlan was voted to be the Council Chair. She said she was looking forward to the position and helping everyone out. She encouraged everyone to contact her if they have any questions or need support.

3. Membership Committee:

- **Reappointment of members:** Miriam read the roster of 5 members in good standing who are eligible for a second 3-year term by Governor appointment. They are Hannah Neff, Mike Gruteke, Steve Kieselstein, Kaiya Andrews, and Gina Carrera.

- **Proposed New Members (Julie Cunningham and Anastasia Douglas):** Candice liked getting to know Anastasia at the Leadership Series. Anastasia is a family member from Barre. Crista said she didn't know Julie personally, but knew of her. Julie works for Families First, is active in the community, has views that align with the Council, and is a great ally.

Motion: Ed made the motion to accept both, Julie and Anastasia, as members to the Council. Dion seconded. There was no discussion. **Motion passed:** 18-0-0 by roll call vote.

4. Chair's Report:

- **Washington DC Trip to the NACDD National Conference in July:** Miriam said there was a high probability that the National Conference will be either cancelled or postponed. Courtney and Candice have both been approved to attend by the Executive Committee. Havah, Dion, and David have expressed interest in a possible third slot on the travel team. Miriam explained that the Executive Committee selects conference participants based on two factors: (1) Preference for Council members who have not gone to the conference before; and (2) the availability of funding.
- **Executive Director's Evaluation Questionnaire** – Every year the Executive Committee collects feedback for the Executive Director's evaluation. Feedback comes from Council members, staff, and partner organizations. Evaluation forms were sent by mail yesterday with a stamped return envelope. Courtney and Hannah told members that they could call them if they wanted help going through the questionnaire. Only the Council Chair and Executive Committee have access to these comments. The Executive Director does not see them. Members were encouraged to respond frankly and have confidence that their response is confidential.
- **Update on plans for full Council Meeting:** The in-person meeting that the Council would have held today is tentatively planned for early May in Montpelier. There is a strong possibility that this will be cancelled or postponed. Courtney and Kirsten will follow-up with details as more is learned about COVID-19 and Vermont's response to the pandemic.

5. Other Business:

Miriam asked Kirsten talk briefly about how staff are working to address the needs of people with disabilities during the pandemic.

- The VTDDC Office is closed until April 15 or later. Staff are working from home.
- Kirsten has reached out to most Council members. This helped her know how agencies are communicating with self-advocates and families. Based on this input and discussions with Green Mountain Self-Advocate, the Council has sent a letter with 10 recommendations to Developmental Services Director Selina Hickman. Copies have been shared with many other decision-makers. She will send the letter out to all members.
- Susan Aranoff has been monitoring legislative committees closely. She was successful in advocating that unlicensed human service workers, including direct support providers, be included as workers whose safety would be overseen by the Department of Health.
- Green Mountain Self-Advocates, with help from VTDDC, created a plain-language guide about COVID-19. The booklet has been shared nationally and was translated into Spanish.
- Candice asked how to contact Kirsten, who recommended her state email, Facebook messenger, and her cell phone. Candace also wondered if there would be a stipend for today's meeting. Kirsten confirmed there would be a half-day stipend of \$30.00; the forms will be mailed to members to sign.

Steve said to Miriam,

“On behalf of everyone... we express our thanks for everything you did as Chair.”

Everyone unmuted their mics to applaud and say, **“Thank you.”**

5. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

6. Meeting Adjourned: Everyone agreed to adjourn at 10:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Hayward